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1. Your reference

P65610GB00

2. Patent application number

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0314730.3

3. Full name, address and postcode of the or of
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Patents ADP number (if you know it)

If the applicant is a corporate body, give the
country/state of its incorporation

8659575001

4. Title of the invention "A Collapsible Coffin"

5. Name of your agent (if you have one)

"Address for service" in the United Kingdom
to which all correspondence should be sent
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9 University Street
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Northern Ireland
United Kingdom

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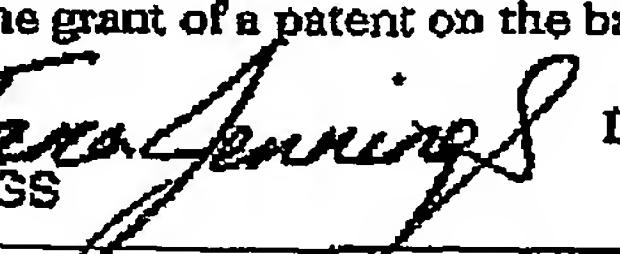
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TARA JENNINGS

Date 25/6/03

12. Name and daytime telephone number of person to contact in the United Kingdom

Tara Jennings - 028 9023 6000

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A Collapsible Coffin

The present invention relates to a collapsible coffin.

5 Conventional coffins are generally rigid, heavy objects which are awkward and cumbersome to transport from one location to another. Such coffins are therefore not particularly suitable for transporting dead bodies from accident locations. Emergency services tend to rely on body
10 bags for the removal and transportation of dead bodies from such locations. Conventional body bags, however, provide very little or no support to the body contained therein.

15 It is therefore an object of the present invention to provide a collapsible coffin which mitigates the disadvantages of the prior art.

Accordingly, there is provided a collapsible coffin comprising first and second opposed end members joined 20 together by first and second extendible side walls; the coffin being movable between a first, storage state, wherein the side walls are in a first, compressed state; and a second, in-use state, wherein the side walls are in a second, extended state.

25 Preferably, each of the side walls comprises a plurality of batons connected together by respective couplings so as to form a Z-shaped arrangement of batons.

30 Preferably, each of the side walls comprises a Z-shaped arrangement engageable with a further adjacent Z-shaped arrangement thereby forming a lattice.

Further preferably, the batons are capable of movement about the couplings such that the lattice is capable of concertina-like movement between the first and second states.

5

Preferably, the coffin also comprises a base portion disposed between the side walls and the end members.

10 Preferably, the base portion comprises a series of elongate rods, each of which rods is disposed between the side walls and located substantially parallel to the end members.

Preferably, the lattice includes a plurality of peaks and troughs formed from the batons.

15

Further preferably, a plurality of connecting arms is provided between respective adjacent peaks and/or troughs of the lattice.

20 Preferably, the coffin is substantially cuboid in its in-use state.

An embodiment of the invention will now be described with reference to the accompanying drawings in which:-

25

Figure 1 is a perspective view of a collapsible coffin according to a preferred embodiment of the present invention, in an in-use, extended state;

30 Figure 2 is a perspective view of the coffin of Figure 1 in a collapsed state, for storage;

Figure 3 is a perspective view of the coffin showing a plurality of connecting arms adapted to provide support to the side walls of the coffin in its in-use, extended state; and

5

Figure 3A is an enlarged view of one of the arms of Figure 3.

Referring now to the accompanying drawings, there is
10 illustrated a collapsible coffin 10 according to a preferred embodiment of the present invention. The coffin 10 preferably comprises first and second opposed end members 12, joined together by first and second extendible side walls 14. The coffin 10 also preferably comprises a
15 base portion 16 located between the side walls 14 and the end members 12. The coffin 10 is movable between a first, storage state, wherein the side walls 14 are in a first, compressed state, and a second, in-use state, wherein the side walls 14 are in a second, extended state, and the
20 coffin 10 is substantially cuboid.

Referring now to Figure 1, the side walls 14 are shown to comprise a plurality of batons 18 connected together by respective couplings 20 so as to form a Z-shaped
25 arrangement of batons. Each of the side walls 14 preferably comprises a first Z-shaped arrangement engageable with a second adjacent Z-shaped arrangement thereby forming a lattice. Preferably, the first Z-shaped arrangement abuts and substantially overlaps the second Z-shaped arrangement,
30 as shown in Figure 1. The lattice includes a plurality of peaks 24 and troughs 26 formed by adjacent batons 18. Each of the batons 18 is preferably connected at each end to a respective adjacent baton 18, such that the batons 18 are

hinged together by the couplings 20 located at the peaks 24 and troughs 26 of the lattice (and thereby forming the Z-shaped arrangements).

- 5 The batons 18 are capable of movement about the couplings 20 such that the lattice is capable of concertina-like movement between the first and second states. Although not shown in Figure 1, it will be apparent that the lattice may include further connecting means (not shown) to connect
- 10 the first and second adjacent Z-shaped arrangements where the batons 18 of said first and second Z-shaped arrangements overlap, thus providing an alternative hinging arrangement of the lattice. In this manner, the couplings 20 (and optionally, further connecting means) enable the
- 15 lattice to move between a collapsed state, for storage, and an in-use state.

The base portion 16 (shown in dotted lines in Figure 1) preferably comprises a plurality of rods 22, each of which

20 rods 22 extends between opposed troughs 26 of the side walls 14, and located substantially parallel to the end members 12. It will be appreciated that the base portion 16 may alternatively comprise a lattice (not shown) extending between the two end members 12 and side walls 14. In this

25 manner, the base portion lattice would be moveable between a first, compressed state and a second, extended state in the same way the lattices of the side walls 14 are moveable.

- 30 Referring now to Figures 3 and 3A, the coffin 10 may additionally comprise a plurality of connecting arms 28 preferably provided on the batons 18, such that when the coffin 10 is in its in-use state, the arms 28 may be used

to connect adjacent peaks 24 and/or adjacent troughs 26. The connecting arms 28 are preferably in the form of detachable latches or hooks as shown in Figure 3a, although it will be appreciated that any alternative form of 5 connecting arms 28 may be used. The connecting arms 28 conveniently provide additional support and rigidity to the side walls 14 in their in-use, extended state. Although the base portion 16 is not shown in Figure 3, it will be appreciated that the base portion 16 may be present.

10

It will be appreciated that a substantially cuboid cover (not shown) is preferably provided over the coffin 10. The cover is shaped and dimensioned so that it fits tightly over the coffin 10 when the coffin 10 is in its extended 15 state. The cover may be provided with one or more zips to provide easy access to the coffin 10, such that a portion of the cover may serve as a coffin lid (not shown). When the coffin 10 is in its first, compressed state, the cover will generally be folded and packed around the coffin 10 20 for storage. The cover may be made from any suitable material, such as a waterproof cloth or plastic.

A bag (not shown) may also be provided which is suitable to receive a body (not shown) within the coffin 10. The bag is 25 preferably shaped and dimensioned to suit the internal dimensions of the coffin 10 in its extended state. The bag preferably comprises a transparent waterproof material, such as plastic or the like. The bag may be sealed tightly using any suitable means, such that the body and any gases 30 or liquids associated with the body or its surroundings are also safely retained therein. The bag is generally kept within the coffin 10 until it is required.

When in the compressed state, the whole apparatus, including the bag and coffin 10 housed within the cover, is preferably of a suitable size for storing within a suitcase or the like. When the coffin 10 is required, for example at 5 an accident location, the coffin 10 is moved into its in-use state by extending the lattices forming the first and second side walls 14 (and optionally the base portion 16) as previously described herein. If present, the connecting arms 28 are used to connect adjacent peaks 24 and troughs 10 26, as shown in Figure 3, to provide more rigidity to the extended coffin 10.

One or more zips of the cover is then at least partially unzipped, to enable the bag to be removed from the coffin 15 10. Once a body has been placed in the bag, the bag is sealed and returned to the coffin 10. The cover is then generally re-zipped. The cover may be provided with handles (not shown) so that the coffin 10 may be conveniently carried. The present invention therefore provides a 20 convenient and relatively lightweight coffin 10 for the removal of bodies from the scene of an accident. The coffin 10 also provides sufficient support to the body being transported.

25 It will be appreciated that the invention is not limited to the embodiment described herein. For example, the side walls 14 may alternatively comprise a plurality of telescopic rods, hinged rods, foldable rods (not shown) or the like, joining the two end members 12. Thus, by 30 extending and compressing the rods, the coffin 10 would be moveable between the states previously described herein. Furthermore, the base portion 16 may also alternatively comprise a plurality of telescopic rods (not shown) or the

like. When the coffin 10 is extended into its in-use state, these telescopic rods could be extended to connect pairs of opposed troughs 26, so as to form the base portion 16. It will be appreciated that although the base portion 16 is

5 preferably an integral part of the coffin 10, the base portion 16 is not actually required to be present. For example, the bag may be adapted so that it is in the form of a liner releasably attached to the side walls 14 thus forming a sheet upon which a body may be placed.

10

It will be apparent that the side walls 14, and, optionally, the base portion 16 (when in the form of a lattice), may be constructed to "click" and thereby lock in position when extended into the in-use state, by any 15 conventional means. The side walls 14 may then be unlocked to return the coffin 10 to its compressed state for storage. It will be further apparent that the coffin 10 may also include a lid (not shown) which may, for example, be hinged to one of the side walls 14.

20

It will also be appreciated that although the coffin 10 is preferably used as an emergency coffin 10, it may be adapted in size or shape to suit any other particular need. In particular, if desired, the coffin 10 may be used on its 25 side so that a body could be placed on one of the end members 12. It will be further appreciated that the coffin 10 is not limited to carrying bodies, and that it may be used to carry any other object or substance.

30 The present invention is not limited to the embodiment described herein which may be amended or modified without departing from the scope of the present invention.

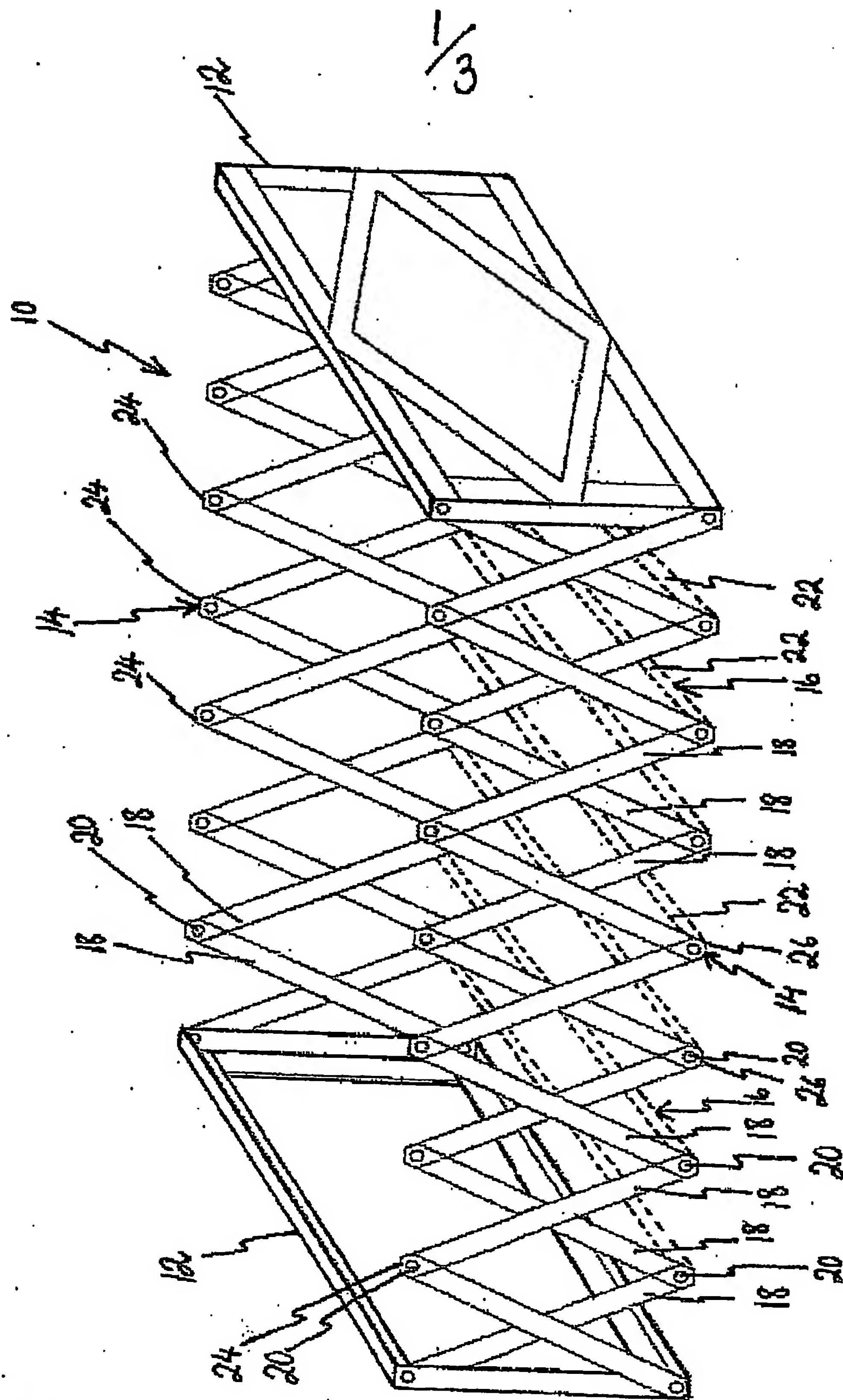
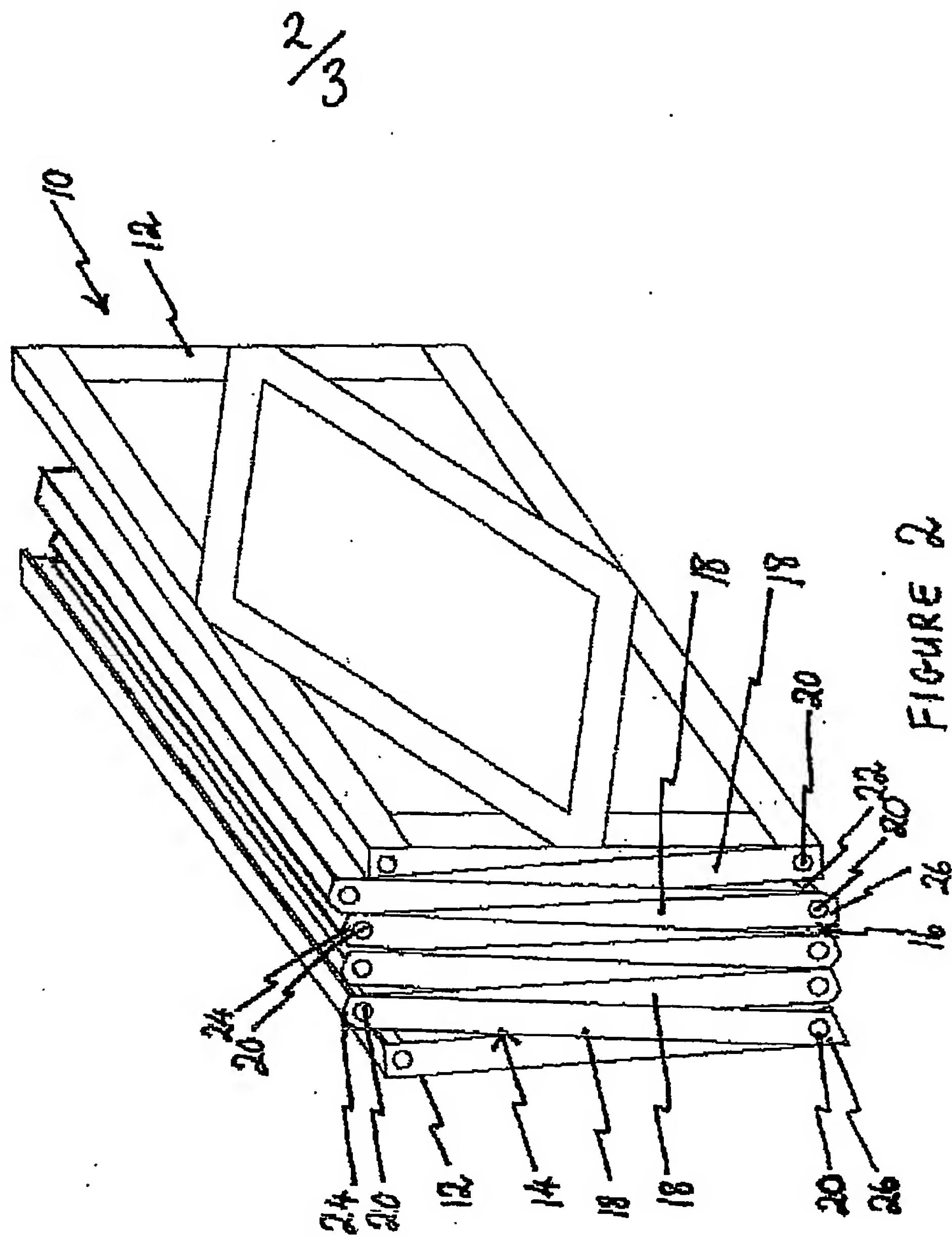
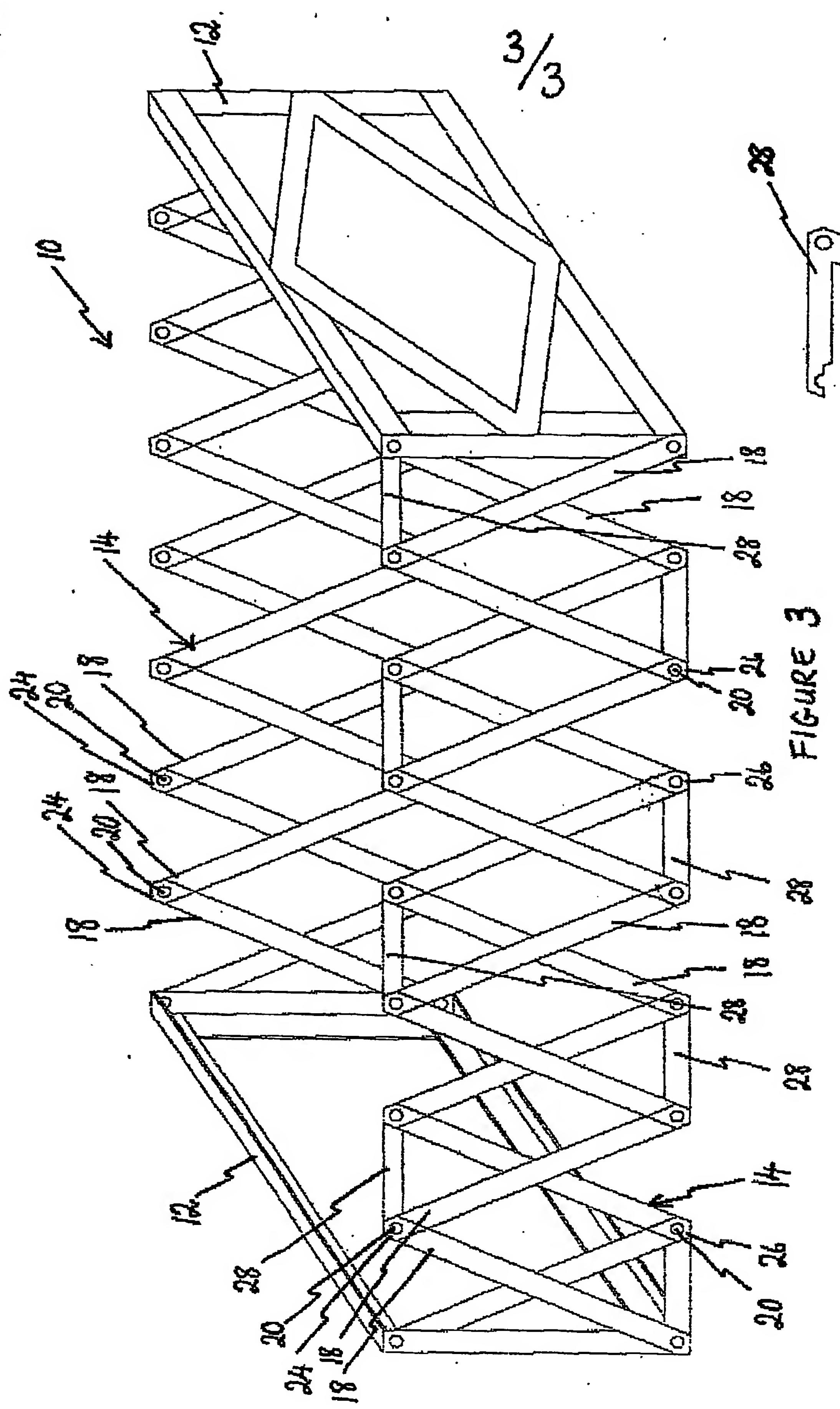
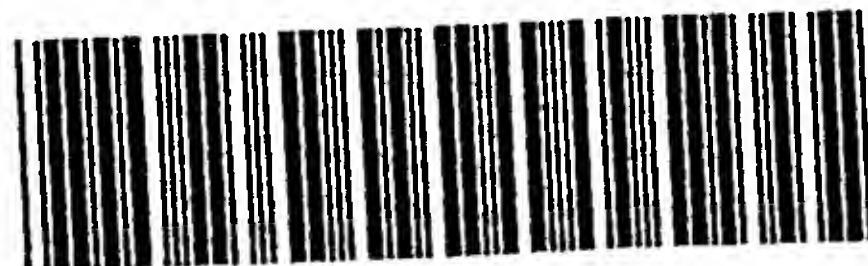


FIGURE 4





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